

**Testimony Concerning HB 5344  
Judiciary Committee, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Virginia Nash, ND  
Naturopathic Physician, business owner in CT**

I would like to thank the Judiciary Committee for the opportunity to express my support of HB5344.

Please vote in favor of helping animals that are abused and neglected by allowing for a volunteer to speak on behalf of animals in criminal cases related to animal abuse in Connecticut.

I have rescued 4 dogs and 2 of them, the pit bulls, are the ones that have suffered the most abuse. One was dumped as a puppy in the streets of Waterbury and was found emaciated when picked up by animal control eating food from a dumpster. He sat in the "pound" for 6 weeks without any interest and I saw a picture of him on Facebook. This dog has become a true family member and my 10 year-old son is totally bonded with him. He is a great family dog. The other pit bull was rescued from West Haven and was sized from a "drug house" in August of 2015. She too, was in need of a loving home and we have added her to our family, with some training! Our other 2 dogs are greyhound rescues that we got from Regap in Woodbridge, CT.

The connection between abusing animals and also being violent in general, repeatedly, has been shown in a number of studies. People who commit crimes against defenseless animals are some of the scariest threats to our society in my opinion. Please consider supporting this bill to make it harder for people to get away with such abuses.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you,

Virginia Nash, New Haven